CONGO NEWS LETTER

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We request that if any material in the Congo News Letter be quoted or reprinted, a credit line indicating source be given.

Baptist delegates to the World Baptist Alliance in Rio de Janeiro will have an opportunity to meet Mrs. Nsingani who will be attending those meetings also.

Mr. Walusai is the pastor of the Tshampere Church in the Vanga field. He is a graduate of the Theological School at Kimpese. He is concerned about the influence of the "prophet movements" which have made their appearance in the Vanga field and threaten the growth of the church there. Rev. Wesley Brown of Vanga wrote recently, "I think the worst of the prophet movement is over. Mpensaba is in jail with cronies for beating up the teacher Ikono at Dula Post. I just finished visiting the villages of Sala, and I think things are healing there too."

The articles written by Africans in this issue have been translated from Kikongo by missionaries.

Another excerpt from letters written by Rev. C. H. Harvey, a missionary in Congo from 1880–1918, appears in this issue. The contrast between the Congo of his day and the Congo of today is an interesting study.

As the readers will gather from the articles by Rev. Emmert and Rev. Jump, the major factor influencing the African church today is the spirit of nationalism. This affects the church in several ways. It is a problem when it fosters the following of African prophets who preach an African messiah. It is a problem when it generates ill will between the African leaders and the missionaries and other Europeans. It is a problem when it creates a desire to direct and rule without an accompanying willingness to assume responsibility. But the spirit of nationalism can be more than a problem. It can be a challenge, a challenge to the missionaries to relinquish the leadership which they have held for so long and to work in a more equitable partnership with African leaders, a challenge to Africans to assume responsibility and make their own unique contribution to the Church of Christ in Congo.

It is a fascinating time to be in Congo. But it is also a time when we must all be in prayer for the land, its people, and the church here.

HOUSE TO HOUSE FOR CHRIST IN CONGO

NORMAN RIDDLE

"NOW I know that God really loves me because you, a white man, have come into my house to talk about Him." The Congolese man who said these words decided to return to the fellowship of the church. His joyous expression is only part of the fruits of our house to house visitations.

Until last year most of my work was at the church centers examining potential church members. Now this work has been turned over to the first two graduates of the Kimpese theological school, Pambi Nelson and Walusai Justin. Each of these men also pastors a church. Since Pambi Nelson is the Vanga station pastor, he visited with me in the fourteen villages that make up the Vanga membership. The other members of the visiting team were two church leaders and the teacher from the village in which we were visiting.

There was no elaborate planning beforehand. Pastor Pambi announced our coming the day before so the people would expect us and not leave for their fields. First we met with the team in the village church for prayer and a briefing session. Then the two church leaders conducted us to homes since they knew the history of each one. Everyone was told to wait at his own house for the visiting party. We did not go into the homes of members who were in good standing with the church, but we shook hands with them and encouraged them to continue serving the Lord and to help others. We passed one crippled woman who lay on a mat outside her hut with her daughters standing near her. She was very cheerful and smiled broadly as we shook her hand. She said the Christians had been a help and a comfort to her. We also met a widow who had no family to care for her. The church had built her a house. Then we met a man who was a relative of one of our central school teachers. He has never been strong enough to work, so the church is taking care of him.

When we came to the house of one who was out of fellowship with the church, one of the leaders told us why he was put

out of the church and all about him. This was often said right in the person's presence. It was not an accusation, but a simple statement of fact which everyone knew. This was a big help in saving time. There was no tactful beating around the bush talking of secondary matters to soften up the prospect for the appeal. We came right to the point explaining God's Word, listening to their explanation, and asking for a decision. Then we closed with an exhortation and a word of prayer.

One old man had not accepted Christ as Saviour because a village teacher had preached against adultery and then had run off with another man's wife. When he saw that the Bible states that each man is responsible for his own deeds, he said he would accept the Lord for salvation. Another person had been barred from communion when sick with a communicable disease and had harbored this against the church for four years. He promised to return to the Church. The most common problem had to do with marriage. The Congolese church has strict rules on marriage and divorce. We often met both partners of a broken home living with another partner in the same village. Often the second "wife" was without benefit of a marriage. Since the real husband and wife were in the same village, a reconciliation could be reached in one day. Cases of adultery on the part of one were discussed in the presence of the other with very little self-consciousness. This, however, did not mean there was no feeling of guilt or desire for forgiveness. Often second and third wives were sitting around while we talked to the man and his first wife. She is not disciplined by the church when her husband takes other wives, but he and the other wives are put out of fellowship. We spoke to each one to get each to commit himself on a decision for the Lord. One man said that he would put away his second wife and ask his first wife to return, although they had been separated for twenty years. He bought a piece of cloth and took it to her. However, she refused because she was too old to carry water and fix his food.

We were rarely refused entrance to a home. One dramatic exception was a man who drew a circle around his house and forbade us to cross it. He maintained we would bring harm to him. Two young men standing near told us they did not want to

hear anything about Jesus or the Bible. Then three young men gladly asked us to enter their house in spite of the tongue lashing of the others. In another village a young man grabbed me by the arm because he was afraid we were going to pass him by. We were able to listen and help him to a rededication of his life. He had been wanting to return to the church for a long time but was ashamed to go to the village leaders because he had been disrespectful to them. Another older man replied with gentle irony when asked if he was ready to return to the Lord, "If I hadn't been ready would I have asked you to enter my house ?" If after careful discussion and urging the prospect was not ready to commit himself fully, we had prayer and left. One such case was a former village teacher who had left his first wife and had taken a second without matrimony. After much discussion we realised that he was still justifying himself and was determined to have his own way. He was rather stunned when we pointed out that though he felt he was right, he could never be truly happy until he sought God's will in the matter rather than his own.

The immediate results of the visitations were often seen at the closing service of the day when the newly-converted or rededicated person attended the church meeting. This did much to increase the enthusiasm and faith of the church members. We urged the village leaders to carry on this work after we left. The need for this often came in the form of a rebuke to the church leaders. One woman said, "I was put out of the church very quickly and since then no one has come to see me." The first communion service after these visitations was very impressive, for we recognized many faces of those we had visited. They made a promise in their homes and then made it good in front of all the church. Pastor Pambi said that all those who made a profession of faith in Christ were attending classes of Bible instruction given by the village teachers.

In one week we visited 220 homes and spoke personally to 300 people. Only five of this number refused to straighten up their lives. The majority of the people we contacted had previously made a profession of faith in Christ, though forty-seven accepted Christ while we talked and prayed with them

in their homes.

These are the tangible results in the fourteen villages near the Vanga station. Since these visits I have gone to the villages served by Pastor Kangunza in the commercial center of Leverville. This area is composed mostly of workers in the Lever Brothers palm oil processing plant. Here the main work is urban, but the pastor also ministers to several distant villages as well. To visit them we got up at three or four in the morning and drove long distances. We did not visit house to house but held a service in each village. We visited each house in the workers, camps, however, until 9:00 or 10:00 at night. We met some very needy people and were able to bring many back to fellowship with Christ and His people. The uprooted throngs of the cities and centers are fertile fields for cults and temptations to sin. One young fellow in a village remarked that he couldn't make the grade in the village as a follower because there were too many sharp-eyed Christians there watching his life. So he had decided to wait until he could go off to the center where he would be more anonymous. We did find many Christians standing true to their faith, however. We visited one elderly man who was in need of encouragement because of his own ill health and a recent death in his family. We were surprised to see his happy expression and brilliant smile. He gave a ringing testimony to his faith and then played his favorite record, "His Eye is On the Sparrow." One interesting phase was our visit to the English-speaking workers from the Gold Coast of Africa. It was an exhilarating experience to be able to witness to them in English.

With twenty-two church centers in our part of the Vanga district which includes over three hundred and forty villages, the opportunities for witnessing for Christ are unlimited. The people are eagerly waiting for us to come. They are receptive now; for how long, we don't know. Various cults and political parties are spreading their propaganda to the remotest village. The scripture portion that comes to us over and over again is John 4 : 35—". . behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest."

EVANGELISM THROUGH LITERACY

ARLEY BROWN

THIS story starts on January 16 as two pastors, two teachers and I joined forces for an eight-day literacy campaign in the villages of Kingulu and Kingoma. The mission truck left us with our bicycles and gear at Kingulu where we were to sleep. A pleasant surprise came as village Christians enthusiastically greeted us and showed us a fine new three-room house to sleep in. We were soon at home, with cots set up, or temporary beds made of a kind of long thick palm branch, split and pegged. Mosquito nets were optional, since the village is high on a hill. A net helps to keep insects and dust from the grass roof from falling in one's face at night. In the corner of my six-by-twelve room was a setting hen. At first we eyed each other with suspicion, but then decided on peaceful coexistence. However, I was almost as proud as she was the next morning when the eggs hatched and we brought out nine little chicks to show the world. I felt differently a couple nights later when some village mice wanted to make their nest in the roof right over my head.

In the week of work that followed, literacy was our method, but evangelism was our aim. We divided into two teams, Pastor Justin Kisaka leading the day's work at Kingulu, while two teachers and I used bikes to go the two miles to Kingoma, returning for an evening meeting at Kingulu. The first day was busy with recruiting men and women of all ages from youth to wrinkled oldsters, each one paying for his own Laubach reader with money, eggs, peanuts or a pineapple. Each day thereafter we started the day in worship under a group of trees, hoping to let Christ call through His Word. In the afternoon, as the thunderheads mounted on each side of us, we met again for singing and worship, then continued the reading lessons. One day a man came as we finished an afternoon of patiently teaching individuals to read. "I want to be a Christian", he said simply. It was genuine. We talked together, and then with God. With real joy we told others of his decision and Christ's provision. Several days later another young man calmly and firmly made his decision to

accept Christ as Saviour and Lord. Many who came to learn to read were nominally Catholics, and we did not insist on any loyalty to us, but only to Christ, and that without fear or reservation.

Evenings were times of special interest and freedom to witness. Each night the moon rose earlier and fuller as we hung the bright lantern in the little village chapel. Each night the crowd grew as one leader after another told a part of the life of Christ, holding up a Bible School picture to illustrate it. In the chapel every sitting inch was filled, and outside those who couldn't find room, or who didn't want to be seen, listened with real eagerness. One night, by full moon, we had a campfire, Congo style, with songs, fables and games. The next night a circle of young people surrounded me after the meeting. I began to describe the wonder of God's creation, the vastness and power of the stars above us, for example. Questions started to come thick and fast. One young fellow had them all holding their breath when he asked, "If a man dies from witchcraft will his soul be also killed, or only his body ? " The ignorance and fear behind such questions are not often so freely revealed, and how I prayed then that my words would point clearly and kindly to the One who is truly Life.

Our method of using the sixteen-page Laubach reader is not unique. Each leader takes a group of adults and shows them the first syllables to learn in their book, associating the pictured objects with their written name in simple print. Then, working with each individual as the others go over the portion themselves, he makes sure the individual has learned it, then sends him to help another in the group. By the time the leader has done the operation several times, some folks have learned all they can from their helper, and they in turn go on to help another. The helpers then come to learn a new lesson from the leader. In this way sharing and witnessing become habits, and each learns the lesson better himself for having taught it.

Some unforgettable images are left in my mind. An old bearded Christian in white skirt and shirt used to encourage everybody as he came through the village singing one of the hymns he loved and calling to folks to hurry and come to the

shady meeting spot. Two old wrinkled grannies, whom everyone thought were way past learning anything, and at whom everyone smiled, in a few days had actually learned to read some simple words. Much patient repeating and encouragement were necessary in all cases, but to see a face light up as one suddenly realized he was reading, actually reading, made all the work seem light. A crippled boy, too old for school, girls who'd passed their school days in baby-sitting, even the old village chief, all were happily struggling with such mysteries as the difference between "ta" and "ka". One pair of men were always found working together. Head to head over a book, their conversation went often like this : Sa ! — No, it's ka. — No, fe ! (It was always fe in case of doubt.) — Oh, you don't know. — Yes, I do. — Look, it's like a stick with a stomach on the side of our left hand. It must be da.

Each day saw new progress. By the eighth day seven adults had finished the first book completely and were reading the second, "Stories of Jesus". Gospels of Mark in Kiyaka, Luke in Kikongo and French, as well as Scripture portions and tracts were circulating freely. Almost everyone had progressed to reading simple sentences in the first book. This was nothing less than a miracle to all who watched, for these simple village folk had often been regarded as incapable of such things as reading. But they were also learning the secret of faith in God. As we gathered on the final day and presented each with a Bible picture for his wall, and something special for those who had completed the book, real excitement was in the air. Everyone knew that this was the opening of a new door of hope and growth. Best of all, for many it meant that faith in Christ really does work miracles.

THE CHAPLAIN AND HIS WORK

ROLAND G. METZGER

A NUMBER of years ago, when the "Institut Médical Evangélique" existed only in the minds and hearts of a few forward-looking missionaries, Dr. Glen Tuttle talked about the need for a full-time chaplain if such a medical center were ever built. He said that in a busy hospital, professional responsibilities often prevented the missionary doctor or nurse from having adequate time to talk with patients about spiritual matters. The key word in what he said is "adequate". In my years of missionary service I have seen daily the concern and sense of call to a ministry of healing for both body and soul which is felt by our medical missionaries. Their contribution to the work of evangelism has been very great indeed.

Thus, when this medical center became a reality, a full-time chaplain was soon requested from the trustees representing the cooperating missions. In 1955 the Reverend and Mrs. Karl Aldén were sent here by the Swedish Evangelical Mission. Mr. Aldén laid the foundations for the work of the chaplain, and Mrs. Aldén made a very considerable contribution through her work with the women in the hospital and the wives of students and staff. Mr. and Mrs. Aldén left in 1958 for retirement.

Again the missions were asked to supply a chaplain, and the A.B.F.M.S. responded by designating my wife and me. There were those of our colleagues who wondered at the time if the need was really enough to justify the services of an evangelistic family. Since coming to I.M.E. a little more than six months ago, we have found that the need is even greater than what can be done by one family. The opportunities for service and witnessing are far beyond even our fondest hopes.

The work of the chaplain really has three parts: chaplain, teacher, and pastor. The chaplain serves as pastor of the local church, whose members are the permanent staff, with the students as associate members. Relatives of patients who may be here for long periods of time also consider themselves as

part of the church. This church is growing in size and effectiveness. At present eleven are attending the enquirers' class for baptism and church membership.

As in all mission schools, Bible and religion are a part of the required courses for the student nurses and midwives. The second part of the chaplain's work is the teaching of these classes, at present nine hours per week. During these first months this work has taken a much larger share of the time than it normally will, due to the need for preparing special materials and lessons. The contacts with students have opened many doors of service as counselor and spiritual guide. These are times of change and unrest, which make especially unstable the world of youth. They need our help and understanding more than ever.

The most challenging and in some ways the most rewarding part of the chaplain's work is that which is commonly considered as his responsibility, namely the visiting of the sick. The thousands of patients drawn to this hospital from all over Congo, because of the reputation for medical excellence already gained in ten short years, present an opportunity for evangelism which would be the dream of every minister of the Gospel. The chaplain helps plan and participates in the many religious services held in the various wards each week. Then through personal contacts at the bedsides and with the members of the families, through prayer and scripture reading, and through the distribution of tracts and Christian literature, a constant testimony is carried on. Staff members and students are encouraged to do personal work, and with evident results. From time to time the chaplain is called, day or night, to visit special cases of urgent need.

It certainly will be of interest to note that only twice in the past six months has the chaplain received anything but the warmest welcome as he has made personal visits to the sick. In all the many other contacts it has been easy to discuss things of the spirit as well as of general interest. It has been especially evident that a knowledge of the people's own language is of immeasurable value. The need for a knowledge of Lingala as well as Kikongo has also become apparent.

Mrs. Metzger shares in the work of visiting the sick. She

has met a warm welcome from the women, especially in the maternity ward. In addition, she has charge of a class for some of the wives of students and staff. These women did not know how to read or write, or barely so. They are making splendid progress. Lessons in Bible, hygiene, baby care, and Christian home life are also given.

With patients coming and going constantly, the results of the witnessing are not always evident. Smiles and expressions of gratitude give proof of the comfort and help which has been brought to the sick and to their families. But we have to leave with the Lord the more permanent results hoped for from the planting of the seed. Chaplain, teacher, pastor; they each present a challenge, demanding the best one can give. Humbly therefore, and prayerfully, we undertake this God-given service.

LEADING A CITY CHURCH

ROMAIN MIKWETI

THE work of leading a church in a city is a difficult task. It is very different from working in one of the rural church centers. There are differences in the worship services, in the giving of gifts, and in the amount of visitation which must be done.

The difference in the worship services is mainly in the number of services held during the week in a city church. In our church we have three major services. Many rural Christians, when they come to the city, do not want to attend worship services. They think that they can hide from the church in the city, that no one knows them and how they live. It is true they can hide themselves from the eyes of man, but not from the eyes of God. Many of them are weak. They are not regular in attendance, no matter how often the pastor visits them. Some of them refuse absolutely to come.

In a rural church center, a pastor travels for two or three

weeks of the month. He visits the Christians in their villages. When he arrives at a village he can call the people to worship. They are used to coming to church every morning at six o'clock. He spends most of his time talking with the people in the church as a group. Usually he visits a house only if someone is sick or doesn't want to be in fellowship with the church. But in a city the pastor must go to each house. He must visit all the Christians. He spends some time each day in visitation. In addition he has to teach the followers' classes, visit the sick in the hospitals, and lead the worship services. City pastors don't have any minutes to themselves.

In the rural church centers people seem to be more willing to bring their gifts to the church. In the city, it seems to me, the people do not have that desire. They do not think quite so much of the church and its needs, but mostly of themselves and the things they see which they want to buy.

For these reasons the work of a city pastor is a very difficult work.

OUR LEOPOLDVILLE WORK

DONALD AND BERNICE NILES

WE are enjoying our stay in Leopoldville very much. It has been interesting to contrast the work on a rural, isolated mission station with a city ministry. For both there are large, central churches whose pastors work closely with the missionaries, and smaller churches in the outlying districts. There are large primary schools closely supervised by an educational missionary, and smaller district schools related to the outlying churches. There are baby clinics, women's meetings and sewing classes. However, in the city there are not the problems of caring for several hundred boys and girls in dormitories, seeing that they are properly fed and supervised, for the city children live at home. There is no station hospital staffed by a mission doctor or

nurse. There are, in the city, more highly-trained African staff members with whom one can work than on any other station. The only ordained pastor of a church among our eight stations is in our church here in Leopoldville. Three more men will probably be ordained within the next few months. Reverend Lubikulu is the only pastor who may make use of the opportunity for a radio ministry as he takes his turn with pastors of other missions on time alloted by the local broadcasting station.

Our Wider Missionary Fellowship

The greatest difference we find in the urban work is the opportunity to know and cooperate with other missions and missionaries outside of our own mission family. In Leopoldville there are the American Presbyterians, British Baptists and the Salvation Army working with us to maintain an evangelical witness. In addition there are missionaries on the staff of Envol, a Christian monthly magazine published in five languages, others at the Evangelical Publishing Company and bookstore (LECO) and also those connected with the Congo Protestant Council which coordinates the work of all Protestant Missions in Congo. It is a joy to be a part of this fellowship.

The English-Speaking Community

In the city there is also the opportunity to have contact with many American and English businessmen and consulate members, who are situated here. Because of this group of English-speaking missionaries and lay people, there is an English worship service each Sunday morning. There is also a Sunday School which our children attend and which enrolls about sixty children. You will be interested to know that the American Consul General and several of his assistants are regular worshippers at this church and that one of the consuls has a weekly class in our night school (teaching English), while his wife helps with the art classes in our Home Economics School.

Mundele Na Mwinda

One difference we regret to find in city work is that we cannot be as close to our people as in rural stations. The mission residences are in an area some distance from the African com-

munities and there cannot be the family spirit that is found on other stations. This spirit has been disturbed, however, all over Congo, because of the political developments of the past year. All white people are distrusted these days by a large group of Congolese. Pastor John Lubikulu said to Phyllis Benner, "It is all right for me to carry a flashlight but don't you carry one." The scare of the "Mundele na Mwinda" is that strong. What is it? It is fear of a white man who supposedly hypnotizes Africans by flashlight so that they follow him to a slaughterhouse to be ground up for meat ! They are sure that this is true because they can't imagine that there could be enough cattle in the world to fill all the tins they see in the stores!

The Church Without Missionaries

It may be that missionaries will not be able to stay in Congo much longer. If they should have to leave, how can a witness be continued? On the way to a church service, we picked up a hitch-hiker. Kiasi John was with us and struck up a conversation native-fashion. "Where do you live?" "What is your language?" Then he began to talk as a Christian. "Are you in Christ?" "How do you know you are a Christian?" It developed that the man was a Catholic, but before he left our car, he had some ideas of what Protestants believe about Jesus Christ.

As election day approached last December, tensions began to run high. Kasa Vubu had given instructions that none of his party were to vote. Everyone was to stay at home so that they could not be blamed for any trouble which might occur. Many felt that they would be taking their lives in their hands if they went out. Our cook, Boko André, said to us, "I don't care if someone does attack me and even kills me. They are not going to keep me from going to church on Sunday." (Sunday is election day both in Belgium and in Congo.)

The church of Christ in Congo will never be left without a witness for Him. Although we do see a falling away of many who were church members, there are still those who put Christ first and who are not ashamed to admit it. There are leaders such as we saw only last week from four different missions, sitting down together and talking about the differences in practice

between the missions, trying to find where there is a common ground so that a person could more easily be transferred from one church to another when he changes his residence.

Should all the missionaries have to leave Congo, there are many Christians such as these who will be His witnesses. To help them they have the Bible in several languages and portions of the Bible and a good supply of Christian literature available in many tongues.

There may be dark days ahead and we may see some of the work we felt to be permanent crumble away, but we believe the words of Paul when he said, "Be ye steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord." (I Cor. 15 : 58)

TROUBLE IN THE CHURCH

JUSTIN WALUSAI

I WANT to tell you about the trouble we are having in our churches from the adherents of the Kimbanguism movement. We are in great danger. They say:

Jesus Christ is the European's prophet and He died for them.

Simon Kimbangu is the African's prophet and he is for Africans.

We Kimbanguists should not give gifts or enter the Christian church.

The dead will rise again and they will bring a lot of things to us, like money and clothes.

We have the power to give the Holy Spirit to someone by putting our hands upon his head. People should confess their sins to us.

Many trucks and cars full of people were going to see Kimbanguism's prophet, Benjamin Mpensaba. One day Rev. Wesley Brown and I went with some pastors to see what was happening and what truly was there. When we arrived Mr. Brown asked the prophet three questions. He said, "You say

you teach from the Bible. First, where in the Bible have you read that someone may receive the Holy Spirit when you put a white cloth over him and put your hands on his head?

Secondly, where in the Bible have you read that if someone has received the Holy Spirit he must fall down and roll on the earth like a snake and cry, "Sin!Sin!Sin!" ?

Thirdly, where have you read in the Bible that when the apostles received the Holy Spirit, they told different people, "You are a sinner" or "You are practicing witchcraft?"

To these questions the prophet answered nothing. Mr. Brown said to him, "Don't preach things which are not written in the Bible. Always follow the teaching of the Bible."

Another day we went to another village. There we found an illiterate prophet of the same religon. Mr. Brown asked him, "Do you think you can give the Spirit to someone ?"

"Yes", he answered.

Mr. Brown told him that nobody can give the Spirit to another person; only God can — if a man believes in Jesus Christ. He told him to always follow the teaching of the Bible.

Friends, those are the people who have made their deceitful plans to throw down our religion and our faith in Jesus Christ. I beg you to pray for us and for the work of God in this country.

MINOR OR MAJOR PROPHET?

Leon Emmert

RECENTLY, a certain Samuel Nsimba returned to his native village of Bete, just three miles from Banza Manteke.

When Samuel was fifteen years old, he was sent to a far corner of Congo because he was part of the then-outlawed prophet movement, Kimbanguism. (See CNL — Dec. 1959) Few in the region really know the occasion of his exile, which was in 1921.

It was a big day when, 39 years after leaving his village, he was to return, a big day indeed in this day of new Independence.

Surely, people thought, this is someone whom the white man had feared because of his particular spiritual power. Perhaps he has found the long-awaited, spiritual secret which the white men have been hiding from the new Christians in Africa!

The return of a prophet is not unusual these days. Prophets have returned before and expressed their view that, as they went away as Protestant Christians, they are returning to be a part of the Protestant Community. However, personal exaltation and public acclamations have brought them to be considered someone the mission fears and certainly does not approve.

The African knows little more than the missionary as to what to expect from one who has been exiled thirty-nine years for religious reasons. We began hearing that Samuel Nsimba doesn't believe in Kimbanguism at all, and that those in the village who had been following Kimbangu were asking to return to the fellowship of the Christian church. The station church deacons thought that the prophet should visit with them so that they might know his thinking. He was invited, with a brother-in-law and the village pastor, to come to the station. But a prophet is the property of the entire village. They rented a truck and brought all the village men. As they arrived with appropriate acclaim, every resident, patient and student drew near to the meeting-room to see and hear. The tea planned was only adequate for the older guests present. After introductions by the village pastor and a welcome by the station pastor, the prophet spoke.

He gave praise to the Lord Jesus for bringing him back and for sustaining him for these years. He did not regret the years of exile. In fact he was thanking God for them. Did he have hatred for those who had sent him away? No, he must forgive his enemies or else how could he expect God to forgive him his sins. He held his Bible high, saying that it showed only one way to Heaven — Jesus Christ. He said that we must not follow another prophet like Kimbangu or a sect like the Seventh Day Adventists, but Jesus only; that we are not living under the law of the Jews but under the Grace of Jesus. He spoke of his work as leader of the Protestant church in that far corner of Congo to which he had been exiled. He told how they built a brick church

and how God had prospered their work. Amazing in the present time was his insistence that a Christian could not believe in fetishes or witches. The Protestants have given Africa the Bible, and he finds that they follow the Bible's teaching. He thanked the missionaries for bringing the story of Jesus to Africa where before only fear of evil spirits had been known.

People listened as never before to each word. Only God knows what lies ahead in the work of each person. We missionaries rejoice that Tata Samuel Nsimba has expressed, and he has pretty well covered all important Bible teaching, just what we have needed to say for a long time. Now an African is saying it with some effect.

Last Sunday Tata Samuel spoke to the first overflow crowd we newer missionaries have witnessed at Banza Manteke. He gave a short, simple exposition of the Gospel, emphasizing that sin separates us from the Lord and a closer walk with Him. Twelve former members from Bete asked to return to the church and participated in the Communion service that followed. Bete has changed since Samuel Nsimba returned. Now he is working in another village which has been torn for some years by three or more sects.

Perhaps he is a true prophet. We've been praying for someone, and as God does use minor servants, perhaps He can do a major revival of His work at Banza Manteke through Samuel Nsimba.

As our leaders see that the missionaries approve the present teachings of Tata Samuel, the question is asked, "What will we do if he starts 'performing miracles' and 'healing' people?"

We don't know how God will reward the faith of His people in Africa. But let us continue to pray that God himself may use His Word and His people to bring forth His fruit, even if the method does seem strange to western Christians. Cultivation and reaping may be somewhat different in this land, but perhaps God will give the harvest to Samuel Nsimba if he follows God's plan.

WAYS AND A WAY

A Chapel Talk by Ngongo Belleon

JESUS was in Capernaum. He went into a house. And thinking to hear Him preach and teach, a great crowd followed him. It filled the room, the windows and doorways. Now I always wondered what was wrong with the man sick with the palsy. Well, he was a man who had legs, but his legs were no good. The man could neither stand nor walk. But he had four friends, friends who were strong and willing. They wanted to get this man to Jesus.

By the time they carried him to the house, there just was no way to get in. They looked all around. Then they looked up. They saw the roof. Carefully they climbed to the roof with their sick friend. Then they tried the roofing here and there until finally they found some pieces they could remove. They took off several pieces of roofing. They peered down. Ah, there was Jesus standing and teaching just below them. Working quickly, they fastened ropes on each corner of the bed. All together now, carefully, gently, down, down, down. Ah ! There, their friend was right at Jesus' feet. Surprised, Jesus looked around. Then, seeing the ropes, he looked up and smiled at the four men who had such great love for their friend, and such faith in Jesus. They were four men with a will. They found a way to get what they wanted. They did not hesitate to do something unusual. Jesus honored them and healed the sick man and forgave him all his sins.

Now I want to tell you another little story. It was nearing the end of the dry season. After the weeks and months without rain, one does not know just exactly when rains will begin. And so, as on other days, the village children, in the heat of the day, rushed down to the stream to bathe and splash and play in the water. Suddenly it began to grow dark. Looking up, they saw that great, black clouds filled the sky. Fear filled the hearts of the children. Quickly they swam to shore, snatched their little pants, and running, put them on first one leg and then the other. All the time they kept running, for indeed the storm, a

big storm, was coming very fast.

Last out of the water were two small brothers. The younger was almost as big as the older. All the other children were running up the steep hillside. Behind was the river looking black and angry. Overhead the clouds were heavier and heavier. The wind was blowing as though the rain would soon fall in torrents. Here, all alone, were the two little boys, the little one just about as big and heavy as the bigger one. And the bigger one who was really very little, looked up the steep hillside and thought and thought and prayed for a way to get his little brother safely home. "I cannot carry him," he said to himself.

Suddenly the older boy's hand, falling in despair to his side, felt his knife in his pocket, a bright, shiny knife. He took it out and ran a little ahead of his wee brother. Then he threw the knife at his feet and said in play, "Come brother, come and get the knife." And the little brother ran and picked up the knife. The older brother took it from his hands, backed farther up the hill, threw it down again and challenged the other to come and get it. By playing this game, the older brother, not much bigger than his younger brother, managed to get the little fellow all the way to the top of the long, high hill, and then all the way home to the safety of their hut, just as the first, big drops of rain splashed down to earth.

It is up to us to find different ways to get our friends, our loved ones, and others to Jesus.

INDEPENDENCE

CHESTER JUMP

WHAT July 4 is to Americans, June 30 will be to the people of Congo. On that day the newly elected parliament will proclaim the Congo an independent state ready to take its place among the nations of the world.

It is now eighty-three years since Henry M. Stanley completed his historic trip across the continent of Africa and down

the Congo river to its mouth, and thus opened up the heartland of a vast new country. Those years have been a time of education and preparation for the event which takes place on June 30.

Protestant missions have played a considerable role in the development of the country. American Baptists have been working in the Congo since 1884, when they took over a part of the field opened by the Livingstone Inland Mission in 1879. They have aided in providing the spiritual foundations on which a new nation can be established.

For many years "independence" was only a far-off dream, and the majority of the population did not even sense its meaning for them. However, in the past few years, and particularly during the months since the eventful days of January 1959 with its riots and disturbances in the capital city of Leopoldville, the word "independence" has been the sign of the times. It has been scribbled on the sides of buildings, in the roads, on billboards. It is the key word in newspapers and magazines. It is shouted by school children who stand alongside the road. It is discussed wherever two or three are gathered together.

Now the pattern for the future has been set. The Round Table meeting at Brussels in January and February, which gathered representative Congolese leaders and Belgian parliamentary heads together, decided the basis for the establishment of the new nation.

The new Congolese government will follow the traditional pattern of the western world of a constitutional government with a parliament composed of two bodies. The Chamber of Deputies will be elected by universal male suffrage; the Senate will be chosen, for the most part, by provincial assemblies. These assemblies will be chosen by elections in each of the six provinces.

It will be the task of this first legislative body to elaborate the constitution under which the new nation will operate.

As further immediate preparation for the task of taking over the reins of the government, a number of the leaders of the more important political parties have been chosen to work with the Congo ministry in Brussels and with the Governor General and provincial authorities in the Congo.

The first electoral campaign, planned for April and May, will select those who will sit in the parliament and have the responsibility for drawing up the new constitution.

One may well ask how all this development on the political scene is affecting the work of the missions and the churches.

The missionaries have sympathized with the legitimate aspirations of the Congolese people and rejoice with them in their winning their independence. Many of the African leaders have assured the missionaries that an independent Congo will provide an even more favorable climate for the development of the church, and that they will welcome continued collaboration on the part of the Christian missions.

Nevertheless, independence brings problems for the Christian church. For the moment, attention is turned to the political scene. Many have little time for spiritual considerations.

Religious nationalism accompanies the political variety. The "Prophet movements" which proclaim an African messiah flourish, and many church members leave the fellowship of the Christian church. The uncertainty as to the future, the realization that the new Congolese government must face many complex problems, the lack of understanding of what independence really means, all tend to make the Africans disturbed and restless. This, plus the tension felt by missionaries and Europeans in general, leads to tensions and sometimes breakdown in personal relationships. Inter-tribal jealousies may prove to be one of the major problems which the new government will have to solve. In recent months the riots and violence have been the result of such inter-tribal enmity rather than inter-racial feelings. Some of the political parties are tribal in nature, and tend to increase the tension. This tension has reached into the relationships between Christians of various tribes in some areas.

But despite all this, the Church is determined not simply to mark time. Consecrated, thinking leaders recognize the problems which they face. They recognize the dangers confronting them. And they are determined also to seize this situation and make it yet another opportunity to advance.

FROM THE PEN OF REV. C. H. HARVEY
(a Missionary in Congo from 1880-1918)

CONDITIONS IN CONGO AS THE FIRST MISSIONARIES FOUND THEM

WE could not but feel disappointed when we first realized how very sparse the population was throughout the whole country, especially in the Lower Congo. The question pressed itself upon us: "Why is this?" The answer which at length came was, — The chief cause is the overseas slave traffic ..... The innumerable creeks running through the mangrove swamps near Banana, and for a dozen miles up the Congo on both sides of the river, as well as the many channels in the river for thirty miles, gave the slavers their chance of hiding from the British gunboats, and furnished good facilities for escape. They were often caught, however, by slave-hunting parties from the men-of-war which came into the river, and short shrift was given to old offenders when captured.

But the drainage of the population up-country was terrible. All efforts of cruisers and gun-boats did not accomplish much more, for a long time, than to mitigate the extent of the traffic, and make it highly dangerous indeed.

The white man himself rarely took the risk of going far inland. When we first came we could not find, nor even hear of, anyone who had gone higher up the river than Noki, just below Matadi. There really was no need for the white man to go for there were always some debased natives to be found who were very willing to undertake the task for the sake of the rum, powder and guns they would receive, besides a share in the plunder. Making their way for perhaps a hundred miles or so into the interior they would make friends with some rascally chief—of whom there were only too many—and a raid on some defenseless town would be arranged. Such raids would usually take place on a dark night. The poor victims were taken by surprise, and being armed merely with bows and arrows, they were an easy prey.

The moral and social effects of this traffic upon the population were disastrous in the extreme. After a time no government was possible, for where powerful chiefs once ruled (and often ruled well) the whole community was broken up into small chieftaincies in very small villages, or hamlets, each owing its allegiance to its own head-man only. Their chief aim was to secure the most out-of-the-way sites they could find and to avoid making any path or track to the village which would be likely to reveal their whereabouts to a slave-raiding party.

Social conditions and the moral state of the community naturally waxed worse and worse. The small villages that they built were purposely surrounded by a dense thicket; while each single household encouraged the tall grass to grow freely around its hut, in the hope that when the place was attacked there would be a chance of escape for them. Such huts degenerated in size and material, built with a minimum of care, for any day they might be burned down in some raid. They were such poor hovels that nowadays no self-respecting native in a district under missionary influence would think of building that type even for his goats.

The cultivation of fields and gardens was greatly neglected. There was seldom more than half the food produced which was needed to feed the people properly. In the event of a short rain supply, starvation came upon them.

Under such circumstances cleanliness and the ordinary decencies of life failed; and indeed were all but impractible. Then it was, doubtless, that certain deplorable customs originated, which caused them to sink to the low moral level at which we finally found them.

Naturally too, under such unholy conditions, fetichism and witchcraft flourished exceedingly, and the poison ordeal and other like importations from the pit were responsible for innumerable murders by the medicine man.

I wish to raise the question right here: "Whose is the responsibility for the darkness of the Dark Continent? and for the ruthless trampling under foot and debasement of a harmless, lovable people, so responsive and amenable to kindness and

sympathy and so ready to rise up and follow those who will answer the dumb cry of their hearts: "Who will show us any Good?"

And the answer is: "The responsibility is the White Man's".

And whose then is the duty of protecting, and enlightening, and civilizing these foully wronged people?

And the answer again is: "The WHITE MAN'S".

NEWS FROM THE STATIONS

Banza Manteke

THE annual church meeting was held early in 1960. Of the sixty-four delegates, representing sixteen churches, one was a woman. The theme was, "Looking to Jesus".

The church is undergoing a period of testing and trial. A revival of pre-Christian beliefs is strong. Two of the villages where the Christians had been saving money for years to put a new roof on their church have come under the influence of one of the prophets. They divided the money again among the people because they have no desire and see no need to repair the house of the white man's God. Some people will not enter a church as they believe the local pastor will sell their souls to the missionary who will take them to another country. Some believe that with independence all the Africans who have died during the reign of colonial powers will be brought back to life.

Yet there are many reasons to be encouraged by this time of testing. The Christians will have to be strong as these days are trying for them too. Numbers are following Christ. This year we had over 450 baptisms. We are getting more and better-trained leaders, and now they really want to lead!

The crowning experience of the conference was Sunday. Miss Mary Bonar spoke at the morning service. She came to this area in 1927 before the station was located at its present site. She remembered when there was not a building, not a tree, not a blade of the present grass—just elephant grass as high as a

man's head and scrub trees with herds of buffalo. Today there is a small town with people, schools, gardens, a church, a store, residences and hospital buildings, all beautifully land-scaped. Yet Miss Bonar said that she had never known such a sad Christmas in Congo as the one just passed. After citing much of the progress that has been made she spoke of hearing in recent months that Christ is only for the white man. We have come because of Christ, but in these days of longing for independence we are accused of keeping the African ignorant and subjected.

In the afternoon six of the African leaders gave inspiring talks on the new prospects for the work of Christ in 1960. We do look forward to this year as to no other year in the history of Congo.

Evangelical Medical Institute—Kimpese

The Medical Institute at Kimpese was host to a medical conference in 1959. Delegates from five missions, including the American Baptist Foreign Mission Society, were present. Dr. Ormond, a urologist from the United States, was a guest of the conference and gave several lectures.

During the course of a Caesarian operation, Dr. Frank Andersen performed a manual heart resuscitation, on the patient, the first time such an operation had been done at Kimpese. This was one item not planned for the agenda of the conference.

Leopoldville

A conference of church leaders representing the missions working in the lower Congo area was held at Leopoldville during the last week in February. The delegates were housed in the Kintambo Church guest house, and the Women's Society was responsible for the meals. The purpose of the conference was to unify some of the church practices, particularly in relation to membership qualifications and transfer of members. A fine spirit prevailed throughout the conference and missionary and African delegates all felt that they had had a rewarding experience.

Moanza

A baby girl, Linda Joy, was born to Rev. and Mrs. Clifford Stabell on April 14, 1960. The Congo News Letter extends a welcome to the baby and congratulations to the parents.

A BIRTHDAY GIFT

(A letter received by the late Mrs. B. W. Armstrong on her last birthday.)

A HAPPY Birthday to you, my dear, — happy in the Lord Who loves you, happy in the love and prayers of dear friends, happy in family and relatives, happy in the work the Lord has accomplished through you.

Although what I am about to say comes from my heart, you will recognize that it is indeed "of the Lord". He conceived the idea, planted it in my mind and heart, and it will be His Holy Spirit which will keep me faithful in fulfilling it. I wanted so much to give you something for your birthday which would really mean a lot to you, and now I know in my heart that I have it.

Here is an I.O.U., a promise to pay ....
Beginning with your birthday tomorrow, and continuing for one full year, I will pray for the work in Congo — daily — pouring out my heart as God shall lead, for the missionaries, the native pastors and leaders, the Christians, and those who still do not know our Lord. By the end of the year, I'm sure my own heart will have been so greatly blessed, I'll want to continue and perhaps the Lord will make it possible. Every mail brings prayer requests and sometimes the day and half the night are not long enough, but the Lord says one year and He makes no mistakes. Beyond that — the future is in His hands.

PRAYER REQUESTS
WILL YOU JOIN IN PRAYER FOR

Justin Walusai and his fellow-pastors as they face the problem of false prophets?

The lay-leaders of the church as they assume increasing responsibility in the direction of the work?

The leaders of the new Congo government as the country becomes independent?

All the Congolese who are torn by the feelings of inter-tribal jealousy and strife, who are uncertain and worried as to what the future holds for them and for their land?

The Christians who should set an example of brotherhood which transcends all tribal barriers, but who are still bound by their old customs and are so often afraid to break away alone?

The missionaries who need an extra measure of love, patience and understanding during this time of transition and change?

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DIRECTORY SUPPLEMENT

IN BELGIUM — completing required courses:
Mr. and Mrs. Harvey Polley

IN U. S. — completing preparations for service in Congo:
Dr. and Mrs. Daniel Fountain
Rev. John Marshall

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* *Precede name of each station with A.B.F.M.S., except Kimpese*
† *All air-mail addressed via Léopoldville instead of Matadi*
‡ *For air-mail add — and Léopoldville.*